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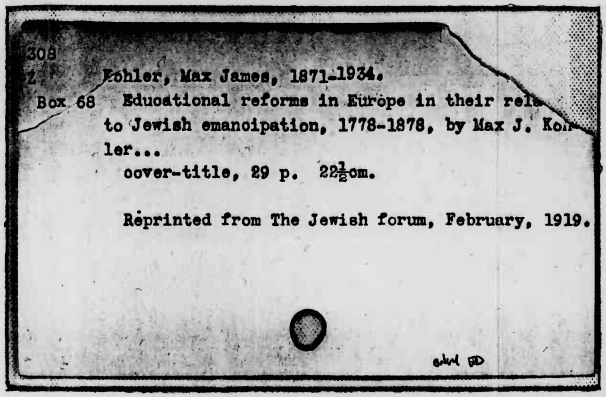

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Educational Reforms in Europe in Their Relation to Jewish Emancipation —1778-1878

By
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Educational Reforms in Europe in Their Relation to Jewish Emancipation —1778-1878*

By Max J. Kohler, A.M., L.L.B.

It is proposed herein to consider some of the measures inaugurated during the era of Jewish emancipation, to induce the Jews of Europe to have their children taught the vernacular of the country of their residence, including both voluntary efforts, commonly at their own initiative, and governmental regulations for such compulsory elementary instruction for Jewish children. The century under consideration begins with the epochal opening by Moses Mendelssohn's disciples, David Friedlander and the latter's brother-in-law, Isaac Daniel Itzig, chiefly at the instance of the great reformer himself, of the Jewish Free School of Berlin in 1778, in which German and French were among the subjects first taught in a Jewish school in Germany, and it ends with the Treaty of Berlin, a century later, which accorded to the Jews of Roumania, in theory at least, equal participation in public school instruction. The importance of such instruction in the vernacular, as a factor in the actual emancipation of the Jews and their preparation for equal civil and political rights in the countries of their residence, cannot be exaggerated, though the subject has never been treated comprehensively, and the intention to do more herein than collate some notes on the subject, is expressly disclaimed. As was well said by Dr. A. Fürst, in depicting the purposes of Israel Jacobsohn, one of the great leaders in this movement, the aim was to:

> "effect inner emancipation, self-liberation, from the spiritual shackles of the Ghetto. In return for acceptance of 'rights of man' Judaism was to assume the 'duties of citizenship,' was his most profound conviction." [1]

* Paper read before the American Jewish Historical Society, February 1918.

1 Die Jüdischen Realschulen Deutschlands, "Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums," Vol. 58, p. 438 (1914).

It has been pointed out that about 1740, in the days of Moses Mendelssohn's youth, merely carrying a German book around in the Berlin Jewish community was an offense punishable by expulsion from the city,[2] and frequent exceptions among the Sephardic Jews and isolated Ashkenasic Jews[3] to this prevailing ignorance of the vernacular, during this period, did not change the average condition. It is therefore not strange that leaders in the work of Jewish emancipation during the fifty or sixty years following our American Declaration of Independence, such as Dohm, Wm. von Humboldt, Mirabeau, Joseph II, Napoleon I and Lewis Way, among Christians, and Mendelssohn, Friedlander, Wessely, Jacobsohn, Perl, Levinsohn, Max Lilienthal and Benjamin Schwarzfeld, among Jews, should have vigorously emphasized this need, in and out of season. It is with their plans and activities that we chiefly deal herein. In considering the subject, however, we should not forget that systems of compulsory public education were introduced even in England and France only within the past few decades, and that our own country, Prussia and the Germanic Empire were long exceptions in these activities, following, in fact, Jewish precedents—the matter of elementary instruction being commonly left for voluntary handling by the various ecclesiastical organizations, and the ignorant parents themselves. It was a new conception of the proper scope of State activity, born of newly developed ideas of rights and duties of citizenship, to recognize with Eugene Lawrence: "When falls the common school system, freedom perishes and reason dies. . . So long as our public schools flourish the country is safe."[4]

Emperor Joseph II, in his Jewish Toleration Edicts of 1781 and thereafter, doubtless influenced by Dohm's book, combined with his ameliorating provision for the Jews, ordinances for their compulsory education in the German vernacular, or Hungarian vernacular, as we shall presently see, his theory being: "What we want is that all our subjects should be able to read, write and sum. For this, learned men are scarcely necessary." As has been well said by a biographer of his: "to secure that the bulk of the people was sufficiently educated to know their duty as

[2] L. Geiger: Geschichte der Juden in Berlin (1871) p. 80.
[3] See Dr. M. Kayserling: "Sephardim" Jew. Enc. Vol. XI and Dr. Deutsch's very interesting paper, on "Spiritual Progress" in "Sketches of Modern Jewish History," B'nai B'rith News, Jan. 1918.
[4] In "First Century of the Republic," Harpers, 1876.

citizens, was his object."[5] His edict was probably the first in Europe for compulsory elementary education of Jews in the European vernaculars.

It should not be overlooked that Jewish emancipation radically altered the relations of the Jews to their Christian fellow-subjects. While deprived of all participation in the government, exempt from army service, shut out from almost all trades, industries and professions, and forbidden to move about, except under heavy disabilities and special taxes, the fact that the Jews in Europe—other than the Sephardim—seldom spoke, read or wrote anything but Yiddish and Hebrew, was of little importance to the State and their Christian fellow-subjects. They avowedly then constituted an alien nation, possessing only certain limited privileges. When they became members of the general body corporate, however, and were required to serve in the army, and were recognized as entitled to equal rights of man, with all occupations opening to them, and with the right to vote and hold office, it became obvious that they could not properly perform the duties of citizenship, without possessing a common language with their Christian fellows. The fact that among them, too, instruction had been almost entirely under religious direction, caused their ecclesiastical authorities, generally, as we shall see, to regard with jealousy, and commonly with hostility, such important necessary reforms, just as they are opposed in our own day, too, by many wedded to the old regime in Russia, Poland, Roumania, and Turkey. But to American students of the history of self-government, the necessity of such reforms, as a corollary to Jewish emancipation, is self-evident.

Attention has often been directed to the fact that the Renaissance period among the Jews did not arrive until the Mendelssohnian era, and that a people who had been pioneers in spreading knowledge, enlightenment and justice from the earliest times on, and had given Europe, in large degree, the stimulus that enabled her to penetrate the darkness of the Middle Ages, was itself so oppressed and imprisoned in the dark, gloomy, Ghetto, that little of the light of learning could enter from the 16th to the latter part of the 18th century. No people ever emphasized the importance and needs of education for its young more than did the Jews, who were pioneers in developing systems of comprehensive and compulsory elementary instruction.

[5] J. Franck Bright's Joseph II (London 1905, p. 147; compare 67).

As was so ably said by the late Solomon Schechter in his study of "The Child in Jewish Literature" in the first series of his "*Studies in Judaism*" (p. 302): "The school was looked upon as a Mount Sinai, and the day on which the child entered it, as the Feast of Revelation" among the Jews in the Middle Ages. So also, in his interesting pamphlet "Education among the Jews"[6], Dr. Henry M. Leipziger devoted a section to the treatment of the recognition by the Jews of ancient times of the importance of the study of "foreign languages", but unfortunately, the principles he quotes from our early sacred writings, were rarely carried into practice in the period immediately preceding Jewish emancipation. Under circumstances that made the bare struggle for existence almost impossible, and living under conditions of compulsory segregation and isolation, the Jews of Russia, Poland, Germany, and France rarely were enabled to learn any languages other than their Yiddish and Hebrew. Conditions were better among the Sephardic Jews, whose ancestors had so often, comparatively recently, written their chief works in their Spanish or Arabic vernaculars, and this was particularly true of districts where they constituted a very small fraction of the population among whom they were living, and could not remain so isolated, such as our own country, England, Holland and sections of France and Italy. Unfortunately, we cannot draw heavily upon the invaluable investigations of Dr. Guedemann on the history of education among the Jews for the century we have under consideration here, for only short articles of his, to be found in the "*Jewish Encyclopedia*" and Rein's "*Encyklopädisches Handbuch der Pädagogik*" are carried down to this period.[7] Dr. A. Berliner's "Geschichte der Juden in Rome" (1893) points out that already in the 17th century, "Grammatica" was taught to Jews in Rome by Christian instructors, and Rhetoric privately, with resulting controversies among the directors of the Talmud Torah in Rome about the propriety of such profane Latin inroads upon the holy law, (p. 68) and already in 1643, the sovereign authorized

[6] N. Y., 1890, pp. 206-7.

[7] More detailed for its consideration, besides the special works for particular districts or schools herein cited (mostly collated in Mr. Freidus' excellent bibliography, pp. 169-174, of Jewish history in the N. Y. Public Library, are B. Strassburger's "Geschichte der Erziehung und des Unterrichts bei den Israeliten" (Stuttgart 1885), the article by I. L. Kandel and Louis Grossman on "Jewish Education" in Monroe's Cyclopedia of Education (1912) and M. Joseph's article on Education-Jewish, in Hasting's "Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics."

a Christian teacher to give instruction in the Ghetto in grammar, logic and other sciences, though this did not continue very long, apparently. From Vogelstein and Rieger's work on the Jews in Rome (II, 300), we learn that Leon Modena of Venice (1571-1648), already, tried to encourage the Jews in Venice to study the Italian vernacular systematically, but in vain, and that such instruction for Jewish girls was particularly deprecated by the Jewish authorities, for fear of their becoming familiar with Italian love poems.

In England, conditions may be regarded as fairly typified by those of the London Jewish community. While we learn from Gaster's "History of the Ancient Synagogue of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews" that a school was attached to the synagogue as early as 1664, in which the younger children were taught Hebrew subjects six hours daily by Samuel Sasportas, to which an additional private school was added soon afterwards,[8] the first reference to English instruction being imparted is in 1772, and is quite casual, indicating that this was then established practice. We learn that in that year John Morgan, the English teacher in the congregational school died, and another teacher, William Capes, also evidently a Christian, was appointed to succeed him (p. 154). In 1803 Isaac Mocatta delivered a famous address to the congregation, condemning in scathing terms, the spiritual decay of the community, and the neglect of education, and insisted on educational reforms and the substitution of English for the then still prevailing system of translating only into Spanish (pp. 154-6). A. M. Hyamson's "*History of the Jews in England*" records that in 1732 a Talmud Torah School, predecessor of the Jewish Free School, was established, re-organized in 1817, and in 1821 a society for the support of the congregational charity school was organized.[9]

As regards France, it should be remembered that in the emancipatory period, the Sephardic Jews were emancipated in advance of the Ashkenazim, a discrimination which had a certain

[8] (P. 16; compare 9, 35, 38—9, 128, 153).

[9] (pp. 225, 243, 295, 312, 338). Compare Morris Joseph's article on "Jewish Religious Education" in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. IX, pp. 631-668 (1897) which records the fact that in 1735 the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of London established a "writing school" where poor children were to be taught the elements of an English education, £20 annually being voted for its maintenance (p. 641) and that in 1818 the Free School in Bell Lane, London, was opened by the Ashkenasic community and in size at once exceeded the Sephardic institution. Feldmann's recent work, "The Jewish Child" (London, 1917) contains little of interest on our theme.

partial justification by reason of the fuller adoption of the vernacular and French customs by the former, fitting them more for citizenship.

As regards the great majority of the Jews of Europe, however, down to the beginning of the appearance of Mendelssohn's translation of the Bible in 1778, the vernacular was utterly unfamiliar to them. Moreover, economic distress and persecutions had almost completely stifled all learning among the Jews, and the pittance that could be spared for paying teachers seldom could secure even competent Yiddish and Hebrew instructors. Moreover, prohibitions upon foreign Jews to settle in Germany and to marry there, made it impossible for the wandering teacher to remain for more than three years, and his alienage tended to estrange his pupils even more from their fatherland.

Luther's translation of the Bible had given an enormous impetus to elementary instruction in Protestant German states, leading promptly to elementary schooling among the masses, and the same was true among the disciples of Calvin, Tyndale and the readers of the English Bible. Precisely the same result followed Mendelssohn's translation of the Bible into German among the Jews in German states, and removed forthwith the argument that only unwholesome, profane, literature could be encountered by the Jew reading German works. But Moses Mendelssohn's services to education among the Jews in the German vernacular were more immediate, for he directly promoted instruction in the vernacular among the Jews, and inspired his disciples and friends to initiate the same. We learn that he was profoundly interested in Basedow's revolutionary primary educational work, his plans for the secularization and nationalization of schooling, and particularly in the school he founded at Dessau in 1774, called the "Philanthropin," which was non-sectarian, democratic and modern. Attention has, in fact, been called to the circumstance that Mendelssohn urged the Jews to promote this undertaking, and that Wessely supported it and enlisted the aid of a number of Jewish families for it.[10] Even the name "Philanthropin" was promptly adopted by Jews for modern schools of their own at Frankfort a. M. and elsewhere. David Friedlander records, that improvement in instruction and recommendation of the German vernacular, were Mendelssohn's favorite theme (Ritter's Friedlander, p. 37).

[10] Monroe's Cyclopedia of Education, article on "Jewish Education" by Kandel and Grossman. Mendelssohn's letter to Campe, published in 1784 in supplement of the September, 1784 issue of the "Sammler"; cited in B. Mandl's "Das Jüdische Schulwesen in Ungarn Unter Kaiser Joseph II"; Frankfurt a. M. 1903; Ritter's "Geschichte der Jüdischen Reformation" (1858-1865), and Kayserling's: "Moses Mendelssohn" (1862), p. 306 et seq. See also M. Spanier-Magdeburg: Moses Mendelssohn als Pädagoge (1898; S. Stern's "Geschichte des Judenthums von Mendelssohn bis auf neuere Zeit" (1870, p. 161 et seq.).

The Jewish Free School of Berlin, founded by David Friedlander and I. D. Itzig in 1778 at Mendelssohn's instance, deserves particular attention, because apparently the first Jewish school in a German state in which German was taught: Ritter (p. 36, et seq.), Strassburger (p. 186) and Ludwig Geiger (83, et seq., ll. 133-8), gave it particular attention in their works, cited herein. Founded chiefly for the poor, it did not exclude the wealthy, and German and French were taught there, as well as Hebrew, mercantile knowledge, arithmetic, book-keeping, writing, drawing, geography, etc. Several of the teachers were Christians. Its charges were 1 1/2 Thaler per month per child, to be paid by those able to do so, and we learn that in 1803 only 9 out of 65 paid even this pittance, 50 Thaler in the aggregate per month being obtained from the remainder. The school's monthly disbursements, including the salaries of its nine teachers, seem to have been 92 Thaler in 1803. Throughout, German served as the medium of instruction. It is significant that the school was started at the instance of private individuals, and not through Rabbinical authorization. Nicolai, in his description of Berlin in 1786, reports that nearly half the pupils were then taught gratuitously. Daniel Itzig, father of I. D. Itzig and father-in-law of Friedlander, was the chief patron of the school. This school and a number of other Jewish free schools were non-sectarian, and included some Christian pupils, until Prussian law forbade receiving Christian pupils in Jewish schools, a prohibition deeply deprecated in print by its director, Lazarus Bendavid, in 1820 (Ritter, p. 13).

In promoting these educational reforms, David Friedlander, in 1780, published a Jewish reader, "*Lesebuch für Judische Kinder*," for the benefit of the Berlin Jewish Free School, whose appearanec promptly created a sensation, (Ritter, p. 46, et seq.), its substantial adoption by Joseph II's government followed, and the obvious effect was to make such reforms general, and not merely local. Subsequent educational activities on Friedlander's part will be considered hereinafter in other connections.

To Mendelssohn's influence and that of disciples of his, like Friedlander, is to be ascribed, in part at least, the emphasis placed

by Christian Wilhelm Dohm upon instruction of Jewish children in the vernacular in his epoch-making work: "*Uber die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden.*" the first edition of which appeared in 1781. In the course of his affirmative recommendations, Dohm said (Ed. of 1783, pp. 128-130):

> "It should be a particularly appropriate duty of an enlightened government, to care for the moral education and intellectual development of the Jews, and thus render at least future generations adaptable to milder treatment and enjoyment of all advantages of society. True, with respect to their religious instruction, the state ought not to concern itself further than is necessary to prevent the inculcation of sentiments of unequal obligations towards persons of other creeds. But it can make provision that in addition to the hallowed teachings of his ancestors, the intellect of the Jew shall be illumined by the bright light of reason, and cognizance of nature and its great Creator, and that his heart will be warmed up through principles of order, virtue, love for all men and for the great social system in which he lives; it can arrange that the Jew, too, will be led, early in life, to ken of the sciences, which will promote his future occupation more or less greatly. This should be done either in Jewish schools, or, if for the present, teachers and requisite funds are lacking for them, they should be permitted to send their children to Christian schools, (exclusive of the hours set aside there for religious instruction). And inasmuch as individual Jews may, perhaps, be prevented by prejudice from making use of such authorization, they ought even be required, to send them at particular hours, to school.. The department of the government, supervising public instruction, (which ought to be a state function, and not the province of a particular religious sect) ought to be broadened, to include the instruction of Jews, too, and only religious instruction ought to be excepted. Concerning all other branches of knowledge, Jewish schools ought to be made uniform with the best Christian institutions, or the participation of Jewish children in instruction in the latter be arranged for, with provision made, however, that the delicate conscientious scruples of Jewish parents that they will not be weaned from the faith of their fathers, be honored."

Already earlier in his work, he had recommended that Jews be required to keep their books of account in the vernacular instead of in Hebrew, in order to promote intercourse with Christian merchants and facilitate determination of law-suits by the ordinary courts (pp. 125-6).[11]

The wide distribution of Dohm's work and its translation into many foreign languages, carried these recommendations into distant states, and greatly influenced their course. Particularly potent was Mirabeau's adoption of them, in his summary of Dohm's work, published in 1787, entitled "*Sur Moses Mendelssohn et sur la Reforme Politique des Juifs.*" But Dohm's first immediate results were manifested in Joseph II's Jewish Tolerance edicts in 1781-2, presently to be considered.

Of course, long before Dohm's work was published, Jewish educational reforms and particularly instruction of Jewish children in the vernacular, had engaged the attention of Christian governmental officials. In A. Lewin's "*Die Vorarbeiten fur die badische Judengesetzgebung in den Edikten 1807-9*" (*Monatschrift* Id. Vol. 52, p. 66 etc. at 66 et seq.) the effort to provide instruction in the vernacular for the Jews in Baden, beginning as early as 1775, was considered. Goethe's brother-in-law, Schlosser, a Government official at Emmendingen, was particularly active in this cause. He ascertained in February, 1775, that the Jews within his district were willing to have their children instructed, but they could not establish special Jewish schools, their poverty being confirmed by him. Accordingly, they desired the Christian teachers to accord instruction without having their children attend the regular school, "as the latter seemed to be too dangerous, on account of the bad behavior of the Christian boys." The teachers wished to devote an hour daily, out of their scanty leisure, to the Jewish children, the small number of Jews making it impracticable to maintain teachers of their own. Three or four kreutzer per hour was to be charged. Such arrangement would be feasible only, if the teachers were compensated by the communities (5-6 florins monthly) and these would collect funds in turn, as the poor couldn't pay anything. Schlosser confirmed the com-

[11] Compare Dohm's formulation of these needs in 1818, as published in Lewis Way's memorial, and Way's expression of similar views at the Aix-la-Chapelle Conference, in my paper on "Jewish Rights at the Congresses of Vienna and Aix-la-Chapelle" in *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society*, Vol. 26. Also similar views in Wilhelm von Humboldt's memorial of 1809 (Id.), which are entitled to particular weight, as Humboldt had served Prussia in the department of education.

ment of one of their representatives, that "it would be preferable for them to afford an opportunity to live, rather than to learn."

But the greatest advance in the matter of Jewish instruction in the vernacular, resulted from the edicts of Emperor Joseph II. Unfortunately, no comprehensive treatment has as yet been accorded to Joseph II's Jewish Toleration edicts, important as they were. It is all the more surprising, therefore, that a valuable detailed account of his Jewish educational reforms in Hungary appeared in 1903, from the pen of Bernhard Mandl of Budapest, based on investigations of archives, and that a Jewish historian, Gerson Wolf, should have published a treatise on Joseph II's educational system in Austria, in 1880, with particular reference to its bearings on the Jew.[12] In a work entitled "*Zur Geschichte des Unterrichts der jüdischen Jugend in Wien.*" Mandl points out (Id. p. 9) that even before Joseph II's Toleration Edict of October 29, 1781, was issued, on May 18th of that year, the Emperor urged that Jewish schools be established in Hungary (and by separate edict in Austria), in connection with all synagogues, upon the pattern of his general educational system, but without interfering in the slightest degree with the religion and the divine service of the Jews, and he not merely authorized the attendance of Jews in already existing general schools—which attendance had to be made mandatory, where there were no separate Jewish public schools—but he appropriated portions of the special Jewish taxes for this purpose. On December 16, 1782, the sum of 3,050 florins was set aside for Bohemian Jewish schools, from the tax realized from Jewish marriages. The Hungarian superior authorities withheld their consent from a proposition that the Jews should either establish normal schools of their own, or, as an alternative, send their children to Christian schools, as too oppressive, and also opposed a project to seat the Jewish children on separate benches. In a so-called "German School" for Jewish children, established in 1782, at Mattersdorf, in which the vernacular was taught, the well known Peter Beer became teacher, and Prague and Triest had organized similar schools. On March 31, 1783, Joseph II issued an elaborate Jewish regulation for Hungary, which included important educational provisions, reprinted in Mandl's work, in line with similar regulations in other provinces

[12] *Das Unterrichtswesen in Oesterreich unter Kaiser Josef II.* Nach einer Darstellung von Jos. von Sonnenfels, Vienna, 1880. Compare the appendix to Wolf biography of Joseph Wertheimer, and his biography of Joseph II.

of his domain, regarding the Jews. It provided, among other things, in condensed form:

> "II. In order that the Jewish children shall secure adequate opportunities to learn the languages officially prevailing in the provinces of their residence, that people shall be aided in establishing schools conducted pursuant to the normal school system.
>
> "III. In accord with his Imperial Majesty's special graciousness, they are authorized to attend the public national schools already established. . . . .

V. It was furthermore recognized that the plan to establish Jewish schools in every province under the supervision of a government director, had encountered difficulties by reason of Jewish prejudice and conservatism, and the recognizedly serious difficulties in raising the funds necessary for the purpose, and accordingly, for the time being, it was merely required that

> (a) A Jewish main school should be established in places where large numbers of Jews reside. The head educational director shall determine how many shall be established and where.
>
> (b) The Rabbis and heads of congregations were required to publish this edict in the synagogue, and to impress upon the Jews the necessary and faithful compliance therewith, particularly as regards the subjects to be taught in the public schools.
>
> (c) Undoubtedly, both in the Christian public schools and in those to be established for the Jewish people, the languages prevailing in the kingdom, German, Hungarian, and the Slavonic tongue, and arithmetic are to be taught, as well as other branches useful for persons of every religious confession.
>
> (d) Chief stress shall be laid upon efforts to omit from all non-religious text-books used in the various public schools, everything relating to religion, so that the text-books be uniform, and this general basic principle shall apply also to Jewish schools, and every non-religious text-book used there, shall be prepared or modified accordingly.

As regards Jewish religious instruction, in order to allay suspicion regarding unwarranted supposed antipathy towards their faith, Jewish congregations are not merely authorized, but even required, to engage suitable teachers for their religious in-

struction in the Jewish schools, in the same manner that in Christian public schools the catechism is studied on specified days and hours, and such instruction in the Jewish religion and dogmas shall be imparted during the same hours as in Christian schools. They are forbidden, however, to assemble Jewish pupils outside of these hours, and to arrange for such instruction on such occasions at other times.

(e) At the start only Christian teachers shall be employed, but as Jewish teachers shall in time be engaged, it is necessary to instruct them through Christian pedagogues in reading, writing and arithmetic. As special teachers are to be employed for this purpose, Jewish subjects shall not be taught in these training-school courses.

(f) The inspectors of education shall select prospective Jewish teachers, to give instruction, in accord with the established normal school methods, from among those chosen by the Jewish communities.

(g) The Jews shall have absolute liberty, to attend Christian schools, and the cost of establishing Jewish schools shall be raised only if they elect to maintain the latter during a specified period.

(h) In order to inspire greater confidence in the Jews in the public schools, particular care shall be exercised in the selection of Christian teachers, to avoid justification for any Jewish complaints against the schools.

(i) In order to hasten the extinction of the Jewish jargon, it is provided:

1st. In places where Jewish schools shall be established, the Jewish teachers are strictly forbidden to give any separate instruction to Jewish children, public or private.

2nd. After a term of years fixed at four, all public and private Jewish teachers not holding certificates from Christian or Jewish school officials—certifying that they are qualified to impart instruction according to the normal school method and in the subjects it embraces, as in the curriculum of the Christian schools of the places in question—shall cease instructing Jewish children.

3rd. After ten years, Jews not yet twenty-five years of age shall be forbidden to engage in specified industries, unless they hold certificates from Jewish or Christian educational authorities that they attended Jewish or Christian public schools and participated in the instruction there.

4th. In every place where a Jewish school is established, children who have reached their sixth year, must attend school.

(j) School inspectors shall visit and report to the authorities regarding children in Jewish schools, and Jewish children in Christian schools.

5th. Jewish children attending Christian schools shall be treated in Hungary precisely in the same way as is in force in the Viennese schools.

6th. Compulsion in the matter of establishing school funds is sought to be avoided by his Majesty, and the subject of ways and means is to be considered with the appropriate authorities within two months.

7th. In the chief cities Jews shall not be debarred from the higher schools, where universities exist, except in theological courses, in order to make it clear that higher instruction is not to be denied to them, and to encourage them to pursue the same.

In some of Emperor Joseph II's provinces, licenses to marry could, after some time, be issued to Jews only upon their proving their ability to speak the vernacular, by production of official school certificates.

Some of these provisions were undoubtedly drastic and others ill-advised, but the purpose underlying the ordinance was certainly commendable. On the other hand, it is obvious that such interference with what had been theretofore regarded as Jewish communal concern, was viewed by the synagogal authorities with alarm.

It is interesting to note that when it was proposed, some years ago, to have the Jews erect a monument in honor of Joseph II, Berthold Auerbach, the distinguished Jewish novelist, suggested the inscription from Genesis XLII, 8: "Joseph knew his brethren, but they did not recognize him."

In Vienna, even before the Jewish Toleration Edict of 1781 was issued, the governmental authorities had suggested that the Jewish community there establish a special Jewish school, but they preferred to have Jewish children attend the general public

schools (Mandl, Id. p. 19, Wolf: *Zur Geschichte supra*), in line with our American system.

From Wolf's "*Unterrichtswesen in Oesterreich unter Kaiser Josef II*" we learn that the Emperor in 1787, directed that a list be prepared of the most important innovations and improvements inaugurated from the beginning of his reign as co-regent of his mother, Maria Theresa, and two of the few deemed worthy to be enumerated were his edicts:

(a) that in places where only Catholic or Protestant schools exist, they should be open to members of other confessions; as also

(b) the establishment of Jewish normal schools.

Wolf also notes that an order has been preserved in the Emperor's own handwriting, dated February 24, 1787, and directed to Count Kollowrat, providing that, in order to secure efficient Jewish teachers for Galicia, he directed that those passing the official examination coming from Bohemia and Moravia, should be given not merely the usual salary, but 50 to 100 florins, traveling expenses apiece, as well as the further sum of 50 florins. He further directed that, inasmuch as children of varying denominations often sat together at school, the prayer before and after instruction, which had at the time a pronounced Catholic tenor, should be dispensed with, so as not to wound the pupils' religious sensibilities. Wolf's booklet is a summary, with his own annotations, of a report prepared by Joseph von Sonnenfels in 1786, for the information of Catherine II regarding Austria's educational system. There is strong reason for believing that Sonnenfels, himself a Moravian Jew by birth, wielded great influence upon the Emperor's educational plans, and in fact, upon his administration in general, and the biography of this remarkable man appearing in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, is quite inadequate, and does not even cite the much fuller sketch printed in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*. He was a distinguished jurist, served as professor of political science at the University of Vienna, became president of the Vienna Academy of Sciences, and was dramatic and general government censor for years. His brother Franz was also a notable figure of the time.

The execution of his plans for modern Jewish schools Joseph II entrusted largely to a trained pedagogue, Herz Homberg, who had been tutor in Mendelssohn's own household. He returned to Austria, where he had been born, armed with strong letters of

recommendation from Mendelssohn and others, and was appointed superintendent of all the German-Jewish schools in Galicia in 1784, and wrote considerably, in aid of these educational reforms, expositions of his purposes and text-books, besides performing his administrative duties.[13]

Particularly important were the efforts of Naphtali Hartwig Wessely to secure Jewish approval and observance of Emperor Joseph II's educational reforms. Himself a distinguished Hebrew scholar and associate of Mendelssohn in the latter's Bible translation, he became the leading advocate among the Jews, of these educational reforms, and it is significant that he wrote in Hebrew his appeals for instruction of Jews in the vernacular, so as to reach those he wanted to win over, though his leading work on this subject was published also in German and Italian translations, prepared by David Friedlander and Elia Morpurgo, respectively, as also in French. Wolf A. Meisel's biography of Wessely (Breslau, 1841; 176 pp.), contains the fullest account extant, apparently, of his activities, which are here relevant. Learning of the concealed antagonism and distrust of the Jews of the empire towards Joseph II's educational requirements, Wessely concluded that it was of the greatest importance to have such precepts confirmed by a disinterested fellow-Jew, from the point of view of Jewish precedents. His Hebrew work, bearing in the French translation the descriptive title "*Instructions Salutaires Addressees aux Communautes Juives de l'Empire de Joseph II*," and in the German, "*Worte der Wahrheit und des Friedens*," was accordingly issued in 1782, and detailed descriptions of it are furnished in Meisel's work and in Carmoly's "Wessely et ses Escrits" (1829). Immediately, Wessely became the target, aimed at by high and low, who dared not inculcate directly, disobedience to the Emperor's edict, but employed this subterfuge, to assail the tendencies involved. Among his most bitter opponents were Ezekiel Landau, Chief Rabbi of Prague, Rabbi David Tebel of Lissa, and the Chief Rabbi of Berlin, and his excommunication and expulsion from Berlin was imminent, when Mendelssohn, Friedlander and others intervened, and the governmental authorities commenced an inquiry into the matter.[14]

[13] See article on him in The Jewish Encyclopedia, and works there cited; Strassburger *Id.*, Ritter *Id.*, Kayserling's Mendelssohn.

[14] Compare a rare work in the library of Columbia University on this controversy by A. W. Halevy of The Hague; also the biography in "The Jewish Encyclopedia" and the works there cited.

In the attacks in question, Wessely was represented as a blasphemer and renegade, and an enemy of his people, and a series of Hebrew publications in his own defence followed.

The edict of Joseph II affected Lombardy, too, and in endeavoring to obey it, distinguished Italian Jews, with the approval of the Governor, Count Zinzendorf, communicated with Mendelssohn, in their quest for suitable text-books. He forwarded to them, with warm recommendations, Wessely's "Words of Peace and Truth," and the congregation at Triest thanked Wessely enthusiastically for his labors, and proceeded to establish a Jewish school, pursuant to his plans. The correspondence that ensued, largely reproduced by Meisel, throws interesting light on the conditions of the day, and indicates that Nathan Arnstein of Vienna, subsequently Baron von Arnstein, was active in distributing Wessely's work for propaganda purposes. Many Rabbis, in various cities of Italy, proceeded to approve Wessely's position unqualifiedly, including the Rabbis of Triest, Ferrara, Venice, Ancona and Reggio.

Joseph II's edict and the Wessely controversy at once gave great impetus to the establishment of modern German Jewish schools, outside of Austria-Hungary as well, and still more to attendance of Jews at the public schools. Particularly important were the Wilhelm School of Breslau, founded in 1791, the Herzogliche Franzschule of Dessau, started in 1799, the Jacobsohn Schule of Seesen in the Harz, founded in 1801 by Israel Jacobsohn, and the school at Cassel under the Westphalian Jewish Consistory, of which Jacobsohn was president, founded in 1808; the Jewish *Philanthropin* of Frankfurt on the Main, started in 1804, and the Samsonische Freischule of Wolfenbuttel, started in 1807.[15]

Of these schools, the Jacobsohn schools were the most important historically, and the Philanthropin the most influential. Before considering more fully the schools associated with the distinguished name of Israel Jacobsohn, it will be well, however, to note the fact that the Prussian royal commission on Jewish ameliorotory measures, in its important report of 1789, emphasized strongly the necessity of the acquisition of the German vernacular by the Jews of Prussia (Monatsschrift, Vol. 57, (1913), p. 217). It recommended, among the principal means for improving the moral and civil conditions of the Jews, the establishment of good schools, with instruction in the language of the country, and a native teaching staff, under the supervision of the Department of Schools, the cost to be borne by subsisting endowments, or a moderate school tax; where few Jews live, they shall be permitted to send their children to the Christian schools, except that they were to be excused from the religious instruction.

Entirely too little attention has been accorded to that remarkably broad-minded and self-sacrificing philanthropist, Israel Jacobsohn, who exerted great influence upon the history of his co-religionists in both Germany and France, and after starting the Jewish school at Seesen, above-mentioned, became president of the Jewish Consistory of Westphalia in 1808, following his attendance as a member of the Napoleonic Sanhedrim, and whom Goethe mockingly named "The Jewish Messiah."[16]

Born at Halberstadt in 1768, he had originally intended to study for the Rabbinate, but he devoted himself to finance instead, and soon became Privy Counsellor, and accumulated a fortune, which enabled him to devote 26,000 Taler per year to philanthropic ends, and reserve only 4,000 for himself and his family. Strongly approving of non-sectarian instruction, he established the school at Seesen in the Harz mountains in 1801, at the cost of 100,000 Taler, at which 40 Jewish and 20 Christian children were to be educated together, receiving free board and tuition, and the school soon became one of the foremost in Europe, attracting children of all denominations from near and far, and presenting a model curriculum for modern needs. It has been contended that an appeal to Napoleon, which he published in 1806, on behalf of his persecuted co-religionists, was influential in inducing that monarch to convene the Sanhedrim. He also submitted a memorial to Napoleon, prepared by the director of his school,—Schott, on the importance of improved education among the Jews. The school he founded at Seesen in 1801, was

[15] See Strassburger, id., Fürst: Die jüdische Realschulen Deutschland's *supra;* Falk Cohn: Die Entwickelung des jüdischen Unterrichtswesens von Mendelssohn bis die Gegenwart; L. Horwitz: Neue Beitrage zur Geschichte des konigl. Westfalischen Konsistoriums der Israeliten zu Kassel, 1807-1815, in Monatsschrift, Vol. 53 (1909); F. Lazarus: Das Konigl. Westfalische Konsistorium der Israeliten, Monatsschrift, Vol. 58 (1914), centenary history of the Jüdische Philanthropin of Frankfurt a. M. 1904; Holzmann: Geschichte der jüdischen Lehreranstalt Berlin (1884); Ismar Freund: Die Rechtstellung der Juden im preussischen Volkschulrecht (1908); F. Cohn: Die Entwickelung des jüdischen Unterrichtswesens von Moses Mendelssohn bis auf die Gegenwart (1880); Reinhold Lewin: Die Judengesetzgebung. Fr. Wilhelm II. in Monatsschrift, Vol. 57 (1913); Israel Cohen: Jewish Life in Modern Times.

[16] See his biography in Monatsschrift, Vol. 58 (1914), pp. 85-96, and the works there cited.

originally intended as a trade and agricultural school, and his brother-in-law, Isaac Herz Samson, founded the school at Wolfenbuttle, at almost the same time. When Jerome Bonaparte became King of Westphalia, Jacobsohn accepted the presidency of the Jewish consistory for that state, and selected some of the ablest men available, for the model Jewish school at Cassel that was founded in 1808, including David Frankel, editor of the famous Jewish periodical Sulnamith, and Jeremias Heinemann and Menachim Steinhardt.[17] Needless to say, it was conducted so as to distinguish the Jewish pupils only in religious matters from the best-educated of their Christian fellows. Jerome appointed Jacobsohn royal banker, and knighted him, and his public activities continued after he had removed to Berlin, following Napoleon's downfall. He was mainly instrumental in securing the abolition of the hateful Jewish head-tax.

Hand in hand with his work for Jewish emancipation, David Friedlander and his associates also worked for improved education, and in the German vernacular, among the Jews, and the zeal and strenuousness of these efforts won, in large measure, the support of Prince Hardenberg, Wm. von Humboldt, and other German statesmen, for the enactment of Jewish emancipatory measures. Almost every one of Friedlander's writings contains an exposition of the need and importance of such reforms, and we will have occasion to quote some of his views presently, in dealing with Poland.

An able and comprehensive account of the inauguration of modern educational methods among the Jews in Posen, after the annexation of that province by Prussia, was contributed by Dr. A. Warschauer to the Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland in 1889.[18]

He concedes that at first, Prussia's acquisition of this territory from Poland in 1772 actually retarded Jewish education. The restrictive laws prevented securing teachers who were not wanderers and unmarried, and they were not allowed to remain in one place over three years. Presently concessions were made to the larger communities to retain one or two teachers permanently, as also married teachers for the girls, there having been strong antagonism among the Jews to having their girls taught by unmarried male teachers. In 1791, an able report was made by von Broscovius, a government official, upon whom Dohm's work had made a deep impression, and who, instead of carrying out his commission to suggest means of decreasing the Jewish population of West Prussia, addressed himself to methods of improving their condition, and thereby rendering them useful citizens. He recommended that a teacher should be employed for each 150 inhabitants, and that the children be taught reading and writing the German vernacular. Minister von Schrotter approved of these recommendations. The addition to Prussia resulting from the second and third partitions of Poland in 1793 and 1795, with their large Jewish populations, convinced the Berlin ministry that the problem of Jewish education could no longer safely be neglected in practice. Minister von Voss reported officially that "this nation is undoubtedly capable of improvement and its members may be turned into useful citizens"; and he admitted that the Jews of South Prussia were better educated than the citizens of the small cities and the farmers in the country. Compulsory schooling and fixed school organizations were, however, almost unknown among them, and it was assumed that Jewish participation in the instruction being accorded to Christian children was barred. Practically all the petty officials reported, however, that establishment of good schools and improvement in educational conditions were the chief panacea. It was recommended that teachers must be employed by the Jewish communities who were fully conversant with German and that marriage licenses be issued only if groom and bride were both able to read and write German. The state should contribute towards the establishment and maintenance of German Jewish schools, especially out of the Jewish tax moneys. A compulsory school tax was recommended, and arrangements to be authorized for sending Jewish children in small places to neighboring larger ones. Such were the underlying principles of the General Regulations for South and New East Prussia of April 17th, 1797. Teachers were to be appointed and paid by the State, and German and Polish were to be mandatory subjects. Till Jewish schools with adequate teachers could be established, Jewish children in the small places should be taught by Christian teachers a few hours weekly, or in association with the Christian children. Jewish religious text-books were required to be in German. In cities where Jewish public schools were maintained, attendance was next made compulsory, and only in

[17] See biographies of them in F. Lazarus, Id.

[18] Vol. III, pp. 29-63, entitled "Die Erziehung der Juden in der Provinz Posen durch das Elementarwesen.

the country and the cities where there were none, were private teachers to be authorized. Exemption from instruction in favor of girls was at first permitted.

In 1803, when the Christian School system of Posen was organized, the magistrates of Posen advised that the Jews should send their children to the public schools and contribute to their maintenance, as they already did in the small cities. Accordingly, in 1805, it was resolved that Jewish children, desiring to attend the public schools, might do so, if decently clad, and the school tax paid, and State subsidizing of separate Jewish schools was forbidden. Between 1816 and 1833, the General Prussian law was applied to Jewish elementary schools, and the principles of compulsory instruction for Jewish children adopted, as well as the abolition of unlicensed Jewish private teachers. Thus was adopted the principle that no one should be debarred from the public schools on account of religious faith, but attendance at religious instruction of different faiths than one's own might not be compelled, and instruction should be compulsory from the fifth year up.

In France, the Constitution of 1791 decreed a comprehensive system of compulsory elementary public instruction, but the same does not appear to have been carried into practice till 1882. Among the Jews, as among other denominations, elementary instruction remained a religious concern, but the principles of the Napoleonic Sanhedrim had induced the Jews to espouse the French vernacular in their educational work. A detailed "History of the Communal and Consistorial Schools of Paris, 1809-1883," was published by Leon Kahn in Paris, in 1884, which is fairly typical of all France, and shows that from the institution of the consistories on, the Jews of France gave earnest and continuous attention to elementary instruction in the French vernacular. In 1812, the Paris Consistory decided to establish a free Jewish elementary school in Paris, at the expense of the Jewish tax-payers. In 1812, there were 12 French Jewish primary schools, situated at Metz, Paris, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Nancy, Thiouville, Sarregnemines, Strassbourg, Haguenau, Bergheim, Sierentz and Ribauvillers. The Paris School had finally been opened in 1819. The subjects to be taught were religious instruction, the French language, reading, writing, geography, grammar, arithmetic, history and other branches. We are told that it was promptly decided that "no foreign language might be taught or spoken within the school, and that the inaccuracy of the language spoken by our co-religionists at that time sufficiently justified such order. Infraction of this prohibition might involve the dismissal of the principal." (Id. p. 12.) The same prohibition against employment of any language except French or Hebrew in the synagogue was adopted December 17, 1831.

In Holland, through a system of compulsory governmental licensing of all Jewish teachers, public or private, secular or sectarian, as early as 1817, Jewish instruction in the language of the country seems to have been assured, in connection with governmental supervision of education.

As regards Russia, we learn that already in 1800, Dr. Frank, a Jewish physician, who had studied in Berlin, recommended to the government that Jewish schools be organized, to accord instruction in Russian, German and Hebrew, [19] and Nathan Notkin in the same year made a similar recommendation.

In 1811, Emperor Alexander I. opened to the Jews, all the Russian schools, such as they were, and is said to have stated that if his dominions produced a single Mendelssohn, all his labors for the Jews would be fully repaid. Obviously, Mendelssohnian influences in favor of the vernacular were potent among the Maskilim and the liberal elements in Russia and also Poland. We further learn that Moritz, one of the associates of Lewis Way, and a worker in the employ of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, himself a native of Galicia, strongly recommended in 1817 to Prince Galitzin, Alexander I's minister of Public Worship and Education, the enactment of a law similar to Joseph II's, for compulsory schooling in Russian and Polish among the Jews, but naturally such recommendations coming from this source were regarded by the Jews of the Czar's dominions, as mere Christianizing expedients.

Many of the Maskilim adopted able plans for educating the Jews of Russia during Alexander's reign. Conspicuous was Josef

[19] See J. Hessen: "Die russische Regierung und die westeuropäischen Juden," in Monatsschrift, Vol. 57 (1913) p. 259. See further as to Russia and Poland; Raisin: The "Haskala Movement"; David Philipson's "Max Lilienthal"; M. J. Kohler in Pub. Am. Jew. Hist. Society, vol. 26; Strassburger, supra; Meisl: "Ein Memorandum der russischen Regierung," in Monatsschrift (Vol. 54, 1) (1910). Since this article was written, Dubnow's valuable "History of the Jews in Russia and Poland" Vol. II, appeared and interesting series of articles entitled "Chapters on the Cultural History of the Jews in Russia" by Peter Wiernik, was begun in THE JEWISH FORUM, commencing August, 1918. G. Deutsch's series "Sketches of Modern Jewish History" in the B'nai B'rith News continue to afford valuable new material, here germane.

Perl,[20] who opened a school at Tarnopol, then in Russia, in 1813, at which instruction was accorded in Hebrew, German and French, and in 1816, he erected a special building for it, at his own expense; Czar Alexander I. awarded him a gold medal in 1816, in appreciation of his services, as did also Emperor Francis I. in 1821, Tarnopol having meantime become part of Galicia. In 1820, Perl had been called to Lemberg to aid the government in perfecting a Jewish educational system, and we learn from Raisin that numerous other schools were established in Russia, patterned after Perl's undertaking (p. 164). Isaac Beer Levinsohn's plans, a few years later, had, as we shall presently see, a similar object in view.

In 1808, the Russian Government had decreed that after 1812, the Rabbis must be conversant with either Russian, German or Polish, but the law does not appear ever to have been enforced. Unfortunately, as was elsewhere noted by me, in the latter part of Alexander I's reign, the era began of governmental efforts to stifle Jewish education, which continued almost unbroken till our own day. (Pub. Am. Jew. Hist. Society, Vol. 26.)

Particularly important was the report on proposed measures for improving the condition of the Jews in Poland, prepared at governmental request by David Friedlander in 1816, and published by him in 1819, which, of course, contained important educational recommendations. It shows, incidentally, how greatly Europeanization had already progressed among the Jews in Germany. Friedlander's work bore the title "*Ueber die Verbesserung der Israeliten im Königreich Pohlen*" and he pointed out that the Jews (p. 7), separated by the Judeo-German language peculiar to them, without participation in general public education, enjoyed no friendly intercourse with their fellows of other faiths, and that social and neighborly relations were not possible, with a continuance of demarcations in language, habits and clothing. He urged (p. 50) first of all, the introduction of the vernacular, quoting Holy Writ as saying that "Life and death are in the power of speech. It is not merely the most important organ, connecting men with men, but also the only one that leads to intellectual development and clarifications of conceptions, and ennobling of feelings."

One of the chief pioneers and leaders in the struggle for secu-

[20] See, besides the Jew. Encyc. biography of him and Raisin's work, particularly M. Ehrentheil: Jüdische Characterbilder (Pesth, 1367, pp. 83-94).

lar instruction among the Jews of Russia, was Isaac Beer Levinsohn (1788-1860), commonly described as the first of the Maskilim.[21] Having himself enjoyed the unique advantage of learning Russian thoroughly as a child, and in infancy, having become a remarkable Hebrew scholar, he became intimate with Joseph Perl, and came under the Mendelssohnian influence. After establishing a reputation as a Jewish scholar and author, he wrote, in 1823, his famous work "Te-uddah be-Yisrael" (Instruction in Israel), but was unable to effect its publication till 1828, and in it he attempted to solve the chief troubles of the Jews in Russia. One of his chief cures was the inculcation of the principle that "the Jewish religion does not condemn the knowledge of foreign languages and literature, especially of the language of the country, such knowledge being required both in the personal interest of the individual Jew and in the common interest of the Jewish people," and that the "study of secular science is not attended by any danger for Judaism, men of the type of Maimonides having remained loyal Jews in spite of their extensive general culture." One of the chief concrete recommendations of his work, was to open elementary schools for the teaching of Hebrew, and the tenets of the Jewish religion, as well as of Russian and arithmetic, and he submitted to the heir-apparent Constantine Pavlovich in 1823, a plan for establishing such Jewish schools. In 1827, a year before the work was published, he had handed the manuscript to the Russian government, which viewed it with much favor, and presented to him a thousand rubles, as evidence of its appreciation thereof. Prince Lieven, Minister of Public Education, in the same year addressed to him 34 questions regarding the Jews, including the following: "Is it true that the Talmud forbids the Jews the study of foreign languages and science, as well as the pursuit of agricultural occupations?" "Do the Jews possess schools or learned books?" "How do the Jewish masses regard their schools?" "Can the condition of the Jews be improved, and if so, by what means?" "How can a Jew be admitted into Christian society and be accorded full civic rights when he keeps himself aloof from the Christians, and takes no interest in the welfare of the country where he resides?" Levinsohn reported that these questions were answered in his "Te-uddah" and other designated works, and he concisely answered the questions anew. He not

[21] (See Jew. Enc. biography by Herman Rosenthal, and Raisin, pp. 204-213; see also now Dubnow II. 125-132).

merely sought to spread his views through his publications, but sought government aid in carrying them out several times in subsequent years. Naturally, he aroused bitter opposition and hostility among his orthodox co-religionists, and the government, with a change of policy towards the Jews, lost all interest in him. He spent the closing years of his life, sick, impoverished and shunned like an outcast. His tombstone contains an epitaph which he himself prepared, containing the lines:

"I fought with God's foes, not with a sword, but with the Word;

"I fought for Truth and Justice among the nations."

Several other Maskilim labored earnestly and zealously for secular education among the Jews of Russia, particularly Mordecai Gunzburg (1795-1846), another disciple of Mendelssohn, Matthias Strashun, Solomon Salkind, Bezalel Stern, Hirsch Hurwitz, Abraham Lebensohn and Abraham Mapu, the novelist.[22] Mordecai Gunzburg laid that family's foundation of a campaign for education which has been continued through generations, as we shall presently notice. It is interesting to observe that Abraham Lebensohn, in 1846, presented to Sir Moses Montefiore, during that distinguished philanthropist's visit to Russia, a memorandum, portraying Jewish conditions in Russia, in which he frankly blamed the Jews themselves for part of their troubles, particularly their benighted educational system.

Max Lilienthal was selected in 1839 to carry out comprehensive schemes for educational reform under the ministry of Uvaroff among the Jews of Russia, and his plans, outlined in Philipson's, Raisin's, Hessen's, Strassburger's, Dubnow's, and Meisl's works, would have revolutionized conditions among the Jews there, but they collapsed when it was ascertained that apparently the government sought merely thus to conceal proselytizing projects. The impetus, which his activities and those of others hereinbefore referred to, gave to educational reforms, led to the operation of sporadic schools for Jewish children in Russia, in which the Russian and the Polish vernaculars were taught.

In fact, in 1848, the government opened a number of elementary schools for Jewish children, but they were viewed with grave distrust by the Jews, in view of governmental persecutions,

[22] (See sketches of all of these in the works cited in the last note).

and after attendance was made voluntary instead of compulsory, an insignificant proportion merely of Jews attended them.

Special attention should, however, be given to the work of the very important organization, the "Society for the Promotion of Culture among the Jews of Russia"[23] organized in 1863, and patterned in large degree upon the constitution of the *Alliance Israelite Universelle*, founded three years earlier. This Russian organization has been identified closely, through generations, with the well-known Gunzburg family, who have unfalteringly and zealously promoted it and other educational work among the Russian Jews. Its first president was Joseph Yozel Gunzburg (1812-1878), who subsequently was ennobled and given the title of baron, in 1874; Horace Gunzburg was its first Vice-President and Rabbi A. Neumann, Leon Rosenthal and Abraham and I. Brodski were among its first board of officers. The Constitution set forth its aims, as follows:

> "To promote culture among the Russian Jews and to infuse into them love therefor. To this end, the society will endeavor to spread the knowledge of the Russian language among them; it will publish and assist others in publishing useful works, and journals, in Russian, as well as in Hebrew, that will aid in carrying out the purposes of the society, and it will further assist the young in devoting themselves to the pursuit of knowledge and of the sciences."

While the main society was located at St. Petersburg, branches were opened at Odessa, Moscow, Riga and elsewhere. The narrow policy of the government, in checking efforts for Jewish education and its bitter and increasing anti-Semitic persecutions, and particularly the restrictions to the Jewish Pale, seriously retarded the work of the Society from without, and a good deal of Jewish antagonism and conservative nationalism from within. Its limited income did not enable it to do much in the way of providing schooling for the millions involved, and its influence, rather than direct instruction, has been a potent factor in the direction of modernization, while retaining emphasis on Jewish religious loyalty. Upon the death of Baron Joseph Gunzburg, his son, Baron Horace Gunzburg, succeeded him as president in 1878. He strongly promoted other educational work also among the Rus-

[23] (See article under that title in Vol. XI of the Jew. Enc. and its biographies of the Günzburg families and afore-cited works of Raisin, Philipson and Dubnow).

sian Jews, and his grandson, Baron David Gunzburg, actively participated in the same organization.

Baron de Hirsch became actively interested in the work of the *Alliance Israelite Universelle* in 1873, and became particularly impressed with the value of secular educational activities among the Jews. He endowed Jewish educational institutions in Galicia for the benefit of the Jews there in 1889, originally with a capital of twelve million francs, and shortly before he organized the Jewish Colonization Association in 1891, to promote the emigration of the Jews from Russia to South America, he sought to remedy the conditions of the Jews in Russia by promoting education and abolishing the Pale. Accordingly, he offered fifty million francs to the Russian Government, to be used for the purpose of improved education of the Jews there, but the government took a stand which indicated that there was grave danger of misapplication of any such endowment and diversion from the purposes he designated. It was only when he felt bound to accept as implacable, the government's policy of Russian Jewish extermination, that he substituted an endowment for aiding the Jews in leaving Russia in large numbers, and settling elsewhere. So also his munificent endowment of the American "Baron de Hirsch Fund" particularly emphasized secular instruction and Americanization.

How hostile towards the education of the Jew, even of the most elementary kind, the Russian autocracy was for the next few decades, and how successful these repressive measures were, clearly appears from a report on "Illiteracy among Jewish Immigrants and its Causes," prepared by a Committee of the National Jewish Immigration Council in 1914, of which I was Chairman, and David M. Bressler, Secretary, and published as U. S. Senate Document No. 611, 63rd Congress, 2nd Session.

In regard to the Jews of Roumania, we learn from the biography of Benjamin Schwarzfeld, father of the late Secretary of the *Jewish Colonization Association*, in the Jewish Encyclopedia, that the importance of educational reforms among his co-religionists strongly impressed itself upon him. In 1852, despite considerable opposition, he opened the first modern Jewish school in Roumania, at his own expense, but in consequence he was actually excommunicated, though foreign diplomatic influence made the ban ineffective. Soon after the school closed, in 1858, the Roumanian Government at his instance, closed the old fashioned cheder and ordered that thereafter Rabbis with a modern education

should be appointed. In 1860, he accepted the honorary position of Inspector General of the Jewish schools of Moldavia. Benjamin F. Peixotto, while U. S. Consul at Bucharest from 1870 to 1875, in formulating constructive plans for the amelioration of the Jews of Roumania, included radical educational reforms, and the adoption of instruction in the vernacular. These measures were approved by the International Jewish Committee, which was appointed pursuant to his efforts by the International Jewish Conference of Brussels of 1872, which included distinguished Jews like Sir Francis Goldsmid, Josef von Werthheimer, Prof. Moritz Lazarus, N. Leven and Adolph Cremieux, but unfortunately, Roumanian governmental action thwarted these measures, as more fully appears from the pamphlet report on "Illiteracy among Jewish Immigrants and its Causes," just cited, instead of overcoming local Jewish opposition to such salutary reforms.

Nor should any consideration of educational reform among the Jews fail to include the splendid work performed by the *Alliance Israelite Universelle* along these lines, though geographically these activities [24] fall largely beyond the range of this paper. It is important, however, to remember that every sound and comprehensive plan for Jewish amelioration during the past century, has included educational reforms, and instruction in the vernacular, as essential elements, and that the Jews themselves, in the countries involved, must add the element of self-emancipation, to render effective any grant of full civil and political rights in the countries in which they dwell.

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[24] See Jew. Ency. and N. Leven's admirable history of the organization entitled "Clinquante Ans D'Histoire, L' Alliance Israelite Universelle (1860-1910)," Vol. II of which will shortly appear. See also the account of the session of Feb. 6, 1900, entitled "L' Alliance Israelite; Son Action Educatrice," by M. Jacques Bigart, and the English report of the meeting of April, 1903.

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